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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 002277

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SUBJECT: FOMIN MUASHER DISCUSSES WITH AMB. JONES "BUMPY"  
JORDAN-IRAQ RELATIONS

REF: AMMAN 2198

Classified By: Amb. Edward W. Gnehm for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Summary. FonMin Muasher has proposed to Iraqi FM Zebari that they form and chair a bilateral committee to resolve irritants in the relationship. End Summary.

JORDAN-IRAQ BILATERAL RELATIONS "BUMPY"

2. (C) In a meeting with visiting Deputy CPA Administrator Amb. Richard H. Jones and Ambassador March 22, Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher recounted his recent conversation with Iraqi Finance Minister Kamil al-Kilani and Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari. Emphasizing Jordan's strong desire to cooperate with Iraq and establish good relations, Muasher noted that a lack of specific information on some of areas of Iraq's concern hampered progress. For example, al-Kilani said Jordan was not being "fully forthcoming" on Iraqi assets issues (reftel). In another example, Zebari complained about the presence of Iraqi "intelligence operatives" from the former regime who are spending "the Iraqi peoples' money" living the high life in Amman. According to Muasher, when he asked Zebari to forward the names of former Iraqi intelligence operatives in Jordan, Zebari demurred. Similarly, when Zebari complained about a proliferation of fake Iraqi passports, he did not provide the information the GOJ needed to investigate, Muasher claimed. Muasher said he suggested to al-Kilani and Zebari the formation of a joint committee under the two Foreign Ministers which could work out mutually acceptable solutions to such issues, including on assets. Jordan was keen to put these issues behind them.

JORDAN'S POLITICAL CONCERNS IN IRAQ

3. (C) Muasher said the GOJ remains concerned about Iraq's unity and the potential for an Iran-style government in Iraq, and expressed support for strong U.N. involvement in Iraq's electoral process. He also sought U.S. assistance in providing security for Jordan's Embassy in Baghdad and its hospital in Fallujah. The Jordanian Charge in Baghdad, (present at the meeting with Jones), Muasher related, has expressed grave concern over reports that some Iraqi religious leaders are preaching that it is acceptable to rob and kill Jordanians in Iraq. Muasher indicated that he wants to send an Ambassador to Jordan's embassy in Baghdad after June 30 but was having a difficult time securing a building capable of housing Embassy operations and living quarters for Jordanian staff. He estimated the embassy, when fully staffed, would employ 22 Jordanian diplomats and approximately 50 local hires.

COMMENT

4. (C) Muasher was pleased to be dealing with Iraqi government officials, if frustrated at the pace in resolving bilateral issues. He requested assistance from CPA Baghdad and expressed the hope that progress between Jordanian and Iraq's political and economic counterparts would improve in the future. End Comment.

5. (U) Amb. Jones did not have an opportunity to review this cable before departing Jordan.

6. (U) CPA Baghdad minimize considered.

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GNEHM